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**CONTACT:**

Elisa Sledzinska

312.744.1973

[Elisa.Sledzinska@cityofchicago.org](mailto:Elisa.Sledzinska@cityofchicago.org)

**CHICAGO WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE TAXI DRIVER AWARD NOMINATION PERIOD OPENS**

*The Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Driver Award rewards Chicago taxicab chauffeurs with a free medallion for exemplary service to people with disabilities; Deadline to nominate is May 31<sup>st</sup>*

**CHICAGO** – Today, the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP), along with the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD), launched the nomination period for the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Driver Award. The award recognizes Chicago taxicab drivers who provide premier customer service to riders with disabilities. The recipients each also received a free taxicab medallion license. The award highlights the City’s effort to expand access to Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV) taxicabs and serves as an incentive for taxicabs drivers to lease WAV taxicabs to serve people with disabilities. To nominate by May 31<sup>st</sup>, riders should visit [Chicago.gov/TaxiDriverAward](http://Chicago.gov/TaxiDriverAward).

“WAV taxis improve access and mobility for people with disabilities and I encourage riders to nominate a driver providing exceptional service,” said BACP Commissioner Kenneth J. Meyer. “This award allows WAV taxi drivers to become small business owners and incentivizes the growth of wheelchair accessible vehicles.”

This is an opportunity for our riders with disabilities to honor WAV taxicab drivers who go above and beyond, and uplift the critical role drivers play in helping to reducing transportation barriers,” said MOPD Commissioner Rachel Arfa. “Our drivers share each year how much this award means to them, as individuals and small business owners.”

The award is designed to reward the individuals that drive the growth of Chicago’s accessibility program. For the recipients, a free taxicab medallion license symbolizes independence and freedom from lease payments, allowing taxicabs chauffeurs to transition from lease cab driver to small business owner. The recipients are chosen by the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Driver Award Committee which reviews nominations by the public and carefully considers each of them before selecting a recipient of the award.

Under Mayor Lightfoot’s leadership, the City remains committed to increasing transportation access for people with disabilities. Chicago was one of the first cities to create a Centralized Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle Taxicab Dispatch Service. Chicago residents and visitors can request a WAV taxicab ride by calling 1-888-WAV-CABS (1-888-928-2227) or by downloading the CURB app. Passengers will also be able to make in-app electronic payments for their rides via the CURB app. For more information, including steps on how to download the CURB app, visit [GoCurb.com](http://GoCurb.com).

BACP oversees the licensing of Chicago’s public chauffeurs and public vehicles including taxicabs, transportation network providers, liveries, charter and site seeing buses, ambulances, water taxicabs and tour boats. Learn more about BACP’s Public Vehicle Operations by visiting [Chicago.gov/PublicVehicles](http://Chicago.gov/PublicVehicles).

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